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*Songs of the Southland
and Other Poems*

By Will Prentiss

Artcraft Studio

Adrian, Michigan

1923



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Songs of the Southland and Other Poems

By Will Prentiss
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Artercraft Studios

5-6-7 Wesley Building

Adrian, Michigan

—1923—

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Dedication

TO MY WIFE

and to

Myrtella Southerland, through whose hope and vision, kindly cooperation and fraternal interest this volume has come to light, to Winfield Lionel Scott, author, poet and painter, and other good friends of the Michigan Authors' Association this book is gratefully dedicated.

Acknowledgement

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THE AUTHOR



*I would be false to that fair land
Where first the breath of life I drew,
To friends and dreams of other days,
Nor would I to myself be true
If I should never thrill with love,
Nor mem'ry ever give the tear
For Southern lands and Southern skies,
And everything I hold so dear!*

*Yet, though I love my childhood's home,
I love the splendid Northland, too,
For helping hands and willing hearts,
And all her friendships staunch and true!
For love can ne'er be circumscribed
By section, or by boundary line;
So my affection you shall share,
Dear Northern home, and friends of mine.*



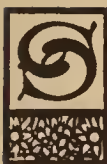
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Sing me a Song of the Southland

ING me a song of the Southland—
The land that is dearest to me,
With her wide-stretching plains and her
valleys,
And her rivers that run to the sea!
Sing me a song of the Southland,
Not loudly, but sweetly and low,
As the leaves faintly whisper their music
When the softest of south breezes blow!
Sing me a song of the Southland,
That fair land of legend and lore!
As a child of her bosom, I've loved her,
And shall love her till life is no more.



Kentucky

DEAR land where first I saw the light,
Where fields are fair and flowers bright,
Where song of bird and hum of bee
Blend in one glorious melody,
Where chivalry is not a thing
That long ago has taken wing
But lives in noble hearts of men—
Land of my youth, to thee again
I bring the worship of my song
For I have loved thee truly—long.

Though far from thee my steps have turned,
The fires of love have ever burned.
In sunshine or when shadows fall
My soul e'er harkens to the call
Of every field and flowery dell
My childhood knew and loved so well;
Of every babbling brook and creek,
Of every lofty mountain peak,
Of every mound that swells thy breast
Where those I love forever rest.

Ah, mother of my youthful days,
Sometimes I seem to stand and gaze
As if from some bleak, barren height
Into a land of love and light!
Then, as I look with misty eyes,
Fond visions seem to slowly rise
And Memory bears me on her wings
To brighter days and happier things,
To barefoot hours and purling brooks,
To swimming holes and shady nooks;

To days when Leisure was a friend
And happiness the only end
Of living, with a smile to heal
The heart where grief had set its seal.
All, all I ask when life is o'er
And loved ones call from yonder Shore,
Is only this: that I may rest
Beneath the sod I love the best.
Then wilt Thou, through Thy Grace Divine,
Lord, grant this fondest wish of mine?



The Face at the Window



SAW her at the window
As the train was passing by,
A roguish smile was on her lips,
A twinkle in her eye.

'Twas but a glance, and she was gone,
And I could never tell
Just why I felt a warmer glow
Within my bosom swell.

I only know those beaming rays
Awoke a strange emotion
Which further basking in their light
Might kindle to devotion.

Yet strange that I should feel their power
As ne'er before in life,
For she was only Marian—
My faithful little wife.

Signs of Spring



THE snows have melted from the hills,
The robin's with us once again,
The trees are putting forth their leaves,
The grass is growing in the lane;
The early flowers are peeping up,
The bees are flitting here and there,
I hear the whispered voice of Spring,
And feel it in the balmy air.
And still another sign of Spring,
To make the vision more complete:
A noisy, yet a cheerful sound,
The hurdy-gurdy down the street!



Back to Dixie

(In which 'Lias gives the "Whys" and "Wherefores"')



AS, Boss, yo' guessed dat zac'ly right I's sho' a Southern
coon,

An' ef de good Lawd lets me live I's gwine back dar
soon!

Yas Sah! I's hopin' soon to see de cotton fiel's onct moah,
An' soon to see de chillen play aroun' de cabin doah.
I longs to sit an' smoke mah pipe, an' heah agin de call
Of whip-poor-will an' mockin' bird when evenin's shaddahs fall.
No, Boss, I ain't no *Yankee* coon. Dat's true as true kin be!
De Southern lan's and Southern folks am good enough fo' me.

Dis am a great big, busy town wid jobs enough fo' all,
But I is jes' a country coon, an' don't lak towns *a-tall!*
How come I lef' mah Southern home? I'll tell yo' heah an' now
'Twar simply, Boss, becace I war a blamed ol' fool—*dat's how!*
Yo' see I heerd talk gwine roun' 'bout dollahs bein' so thick
Up heah dat dey jes' growed on trees fo' any man to pick!
Dar's dollahs *growin'* heah all right, but not on any *tree*,
An' I ain't seen none sproutin' roun' a po' ol' coon lak me!

So now I's hopin' soon to leave dis lan' of ice an' snow
Fo' Dixie whar de wil' rose an' de sweet magnolia grow!
An' ef I lives to see agin mah little cabin home,
Lawd, heah me whilst I's swearin' dat I'll nevah from it roam!
Dar whah mah wife an' chillen' is, an' all I love so well,
In dat blest sunny Southern lan' I hopes in peace to dwell;
An' dar on dear ol' Dixie's soil, beneath a Southern sky,
Amid de ol' familiah scenes, Lawd, let me live and die!

To a Park Bench



If you had gift of speech, O humble bench,
What strange and wondrous tales we all might
hear!

Some you could tell would chill the blood,
perhaps,

And freeze the very soul with nameless fear.

Another would reveal a dream of love

So sorrowful 'twould cause the tear to start,

So fraught with poignant grief and blighted hopes

'Twould wring the inmost fibre of the heart.

Another would reveal the whispered words

Of love that fell as soft as morning's dew

Into a maiden's eager, listening ear—

The old sweet story—old, yet ever new.

And still another tale would be of one

Who, steeped in crime and sin, and sick with shame,

Came here at Conscience' call to breathe a prayer

For help to gain once more an honored name.

For here come men from all the walks of life:

The low-browed wretch, perhaps to plot and plan

In his dark soul just where and when and how

He best may cheat and rob his fellow man;

The grave, the gay, the drifter on life's sea,

The happy lover, and the lone one, too.

All these you've known and heard, O humble bench,

For all have come and told their tales to you!

Believe me, then, Dear Mary



HEN all the world seems false, Love,
And faithful friends seem few,
Believe me, then, dear Mary,
I'll still remember you.
When I, perhaps, am far away
And seas between us roll,
The thought of you will ever bring
Fresh courage to my soul.

Believe me, then, dear Mary,
To me there's none so fair,
Nor none in grace of form or face
With you can half compare!
Believe me, then, dear Mary,
Though youth may pass away,
Time cannot quench the flame of love
That's in my heart today!

Believe me, then, dear Mary,
When friendship's gold seems dross,
When disappointment follows hope,
And profit ends in loss,
'Tis then, as in our happier hours,
My heart will still prove true.
Will you then think of me, perhaps,
As I shall dream of you?

We'll Have a Little Farm House



E'LL have a little farm house, Love, close down beside
the sea—

A tiny little bungalow just built for you and me,
And I will 'tend the little farm, and when my work is o'er,
At evening you will wait for me beside the cottage door.
Then later, when night's shadows fall, we'll stroll—just you
and I—

Along the beach and watch the stars that blossom in the sky.
O how my heart thrills with delight! How happy we will be
In that dear little farm house, Love, close down beside the sea!

We'll have a little farm house, Love, close down beside the sea,
And there we'll dwell in peace and joy as happy as can be;
And when old age creeps on at last, and turns our hair to grey,
I'll love you with the same old love, and in the same old way,
Nor shall devotion ever fade, nor shall affection die
In youth and age you'll ever be the apple of my eye!
And so through all the years to come we'll ever happy be
Within that little farm house, Love, close down beside the sea.

We'll have a little farm house, Love, close down beside the sea,
A tiny nest just built for two, or—well—perhaps for three;
For later to our hearts and home a little creature bright
Perhaps may come and dwell with us and bring us new delight,
And, later still, when I can trace in your abundant hair
The silver threads that tell that Time has placed his finger
there,

I'll love you just as much, Dear Heart, you'll be the same to me
As when we built this little home close down beside the sea.

The Man who is Really Worth While

*"The man worth while is the man who will smile
When everything goes dead wrong."*



HE man, I will own, who can quietly smile
When things go eternally wrong
Is worthy of all the high honor and praise
That's been given in story and song.

'Tis a staunch heart and true that fares smilingly on,
And refuses to sound a retreat,
Though around him the clouds of unhappiness roll
And the storms of adversity beat.

But, while honor we give to this man as his due,
There's another whose praise I would sing:
'Tis the man who will *fight* with all vigor and might
When misfortune at him takes a fling;
Who tightens his lips while he tightens his belt,
And with never a smile or a grin,
When troubles assail him before and behind
Just rolls up his sleeves and wades in!

Some troubles we meet as we journey through life
Are too deep to be met with a smile.
'Tis then that the man who gives battle and wins
Is the man who is really worth while.
He may frown, he may smile, he may threaten in vain,
But old Trouble will flee before long
If he rolls up his sleeves for a fight to the end,
When everthing goes dead wrong.

I Think of Thee



THINK of thee when morning's sun shines brightly
And every rosebud glows, a dew-crowned Queen,
When winds as soft as thistle-down fan lightly,
When hills and fields are clad in shimm'ring green
And when night draws her sable mantle 'round us
And crickets voice in strident tones their glee,
Ere slumber's golden chain has firmly bound us,
O then I think of thee—I think of thee!

I think of thee when Spring wakes smiling Nature
And all is beautiful and fair and bright,
When joyous song from every winged creature
Bids sorrow flee, and human hearts be light,
And when the sun bursts forth, his glory throwing
About the storm to bid its darkness flee
And all is beautiful and bright and glowing,
'Tis then again, Dear Heart, I think of thee!

She Gave me a Rose



HE gave me a rose when I bade her farewell
And its fragrance will ever remain
To soften each sorrow, to sweeten each joy
And lighten the burden of pain.

Yes, in memory its fragrance will ever endure,
Though its petals are withered away,
For this heart that throbbed once with love only for her
Still throbs for her memory today!

Still the mocking bird sings from the apple tree's bough
His sweet vesper at daylight's decline
As he sang in that eventide long years ago
When she whispered that she would be mine!

And now I bring lilies as pure and white
As the snow on the mountain's high crest,
And tenderly place them, while bitter tears flow,
On the grave where they laid her to rest.

* * *

She gave me a rose when I bade her farewell
And its fragrance will never depart;
But the fond recollection can never remove
The pain that abides in my heart.

Should I Complain



SHOULD I complain if things are not just as I'd always have them be?

If fame has never wreathed my brow, nor fortune deigned to smile on me?

Should I complain, and fret and fume because my way has ever been

Along the paths beneath the heights, the humbler walks of humbler men?

Why should I crave a life of ease or look upon the rich man's prize—

His hoard of silver, lands and gold—with envious heart and wistful eyes?

Perhaps to gain this princely store and all the power that goes with wealth

He sacrificed a richer prize—the gift of youth and rugged health.

Today I saw a man to whom the blackest night or noonday sun,
The softened light of harvest moon and glow of tender stars are one.
Blind, wholly blind through all the years e'en since the very hour of birth!

His sightless eyes had ne'er beheld the flowers and grass that deck the earth,

Nor crystal stream, nor lofty tree, nor bird, nor bright winged butterfly,

Nor rosy blush of early morn, nor azure hue of summer sky.

Yet, as the sunbeams pierce the clouds, though raindrops gently fall the while,

I saw across his features steal the sunshine of a friendly smile.

And then within my heart I said: If this poor wretch bereft of sight
Can smile, and still be of good cheer, living in an endless night,
If he can look with grateful heart and placid smile of sweet content


Upon a life so drab and sere in everlasting darkness spent,
Then why should I complain if things are not just as I'd have them be?

I have the wealth of strength, and health, and ears to hear, and eyes to see.

No richer gifts can fortune give, nor can the greatest wealth restore

The sight unto the sightless eye, or health that's gone forever-more.

Bernardine

AIR Bernardine! My Bernardine!
When first I saw her face
My heart was made a willing slave
By her sweet charm and grace.

As days went by a mine of love
Within my heart was stored
Until at last the golden flood
Into her ear I poured!

* * *

Six months have passed since we were wed.
How swift time's wheels have rolled!
Yet every fleeting day and hour
Some fresh charm doth unfold.
My heart dotes on her every word,
Each pensive smile and look,
Yet all these charms I would forego
If Bernardine *could cook!*

My Two Friends



HAVE a friend who always comes, when fortune smiles
on me,
With outstretched hand, and tells me what a good old
pal is he.

He says that I may count on him in time of weal or woe,
Which must be true, for he, himself, has often told me so.
And yet when one day fortune turned her smiling face away
And sorrow came and sat with me and life seemed drab and
gray,
This friend, who in the brighter days was always sticking
'round,
Somehow just seemed to fade away and nowhere could be found!

But, while I groped in deep despair and nursed my helpless
grief,
With nothing in the future that gave promise of relief,
Another friend, with silent tread, came up and looked at me
With soft brown eyes that held the light of love and sympathy.
He offered neither vapid smirks, nor words of fulsome praise,
But well I knew that friendship true was in his honest gaze.
So if I'd choose a friend for life think you 'twould be the man,
Or rather would you think I'd choose my faithful collie, Dan?

Luck



SMITH surely is a lucky chap', I often hear men say,
'And all the worth-while things of life just seem to come
his way,'

Which may be true'', said "Daddy" Green, "but I
well mind when he

Was but a plodder and as poor as any man could be;

But when he works I've noticed that he works with all his
might,

And everything he does, it seems, is done exactly right.

So don't you think," said "Daddy" Green, "that maybe 'stid
of luck

He won the thing we call Success by simple grit and pluck?

"Now there's another chap I know who seems as bright as he,

And just why Fortune frowns on him I never quite could see,

Unless perhaps it is because the vigor, pep and vim

This fellow Smith brings to his work you'll seldom find in him.

He never seems to find the work that suits his talent quite,

The task is over heavy or the pay a bit too light.

He always scans with wistful eyes the fields just over there

Where to him the grass seems greener, and the flowers seem
more fair.

"And so'', said "Daddy" Green, "I think this thing that men
call luck

Is often but a simple blend of honest work and pluck.

And if a chap will do his best, whate'er his task may be,

The chances are in time he'll know the thrill of Victory.

Work is the only thing that brings the golden prize, Success,

And work alone can point the way to perfect happiness.

Work, earnest work, and purpose true, and grit and vim and
pluck:

These are the elements that form the thing the world calls
LUCK!"

When Yo' Roll Dem Eyes at Me



HEN yo' roll dem eyes at me,
An' yo' show yo' teeth like dat
Makes mah haid go roun' an' roun',
An' I doan know whah I's at!
Wish yo'd quit yo' foolin,' gal!
Ef yo' lubs me tell me so,
But ef yo's jes' kiddin' me
Doan yo' roll dem eyes no mo'!

When yo' roll dem eyes at me,
Roll dem big brown eyes at me,
I goes deaf an' dumb, and blin'—
When yo' roll dem eyes at me!
Yo' is jes' a flirt, dey say,
Vampin' evah coon yo' see,
But I lubs yo' jes' de same
When yo' roll dem eyes at me!

When yo' roll dem eyes at me
All de worl' seems bright an' fair,
Birds a-singin' in de trees,
Flowers bloomin' ebrywhere!
Guess I is de bigges' fool
Anybody ebber see,
But I *cain't* he'p lovin' yo'
When yo' roll dem eyes at me!

March



AIL, March, with all your blustrous winds
That roar through barren hedge and tree!
I know that with your vagrant smiles
You've come to set the verdure free,
I know that soon the grass will spring;
The crocus and the buttercup,
Obedient to your wakening hand,
Will soon be peeping shyly up.

I know that all the snow-clad hills
And all the vales that lie between,
And every naked tree and bush
Will soon stand forth in living green!
I know that soon the whispering breeze,
And all the birds and bees a-wing,
And every ice-bound brook set free
Will chant glad tidings of the Spring!

Yours is the thankless task, O March,
To bridge the bleak uncertain hours
That lie between the Winter's snows
And April's smiles and Maytime flowers.
Then here's a greeting, March, to you,
With all your wild and roistering ways,
For well I know they're but the mask
For softer smiles and sunnier days!

Introducing Mr. Green

I.



'LL tell you what's a fact, my friend," said Hezekiah Green,

"This is the blamedest, hottest spell that I have ever seen.

I've never felt such stiflin' air nor sun so blazin' hot!
In vain I've sought the forest's shade to find a coolin' spot.
How glad I'll be when summer's done and autumn days are
here—

Those calm, mild days of smoke and haze, and skies serene
and clear!

Yes, give to me the days of fall,
They are the very best of all!

II.

"This is a funny kind of fall," said Hezekiah Green,
"I cannot jest remember when another such I've seen.
It's rained so much and blowed so much, there's been so
little sun

That I have had no chance at all to get my farm work done.
Fact is, though you may think it strange, I never liked at
all

The hazy, lazy windy days, the rainy days of fall.
But winter, with its fresh crisp air—
With it no season can compare!

III.

"By Heck," said Hezekiah Green one bitter winter morn,
"Sech cold as this I've never felt, I'm sure, since I was
born.

I never was a hand," said he, "to grumble and complain,
But bless me if I won't be glad when spring has come again!
I long to see the growin' grass, the flowers, and leafin' trees,
To hear the robin's cheerful notes, the hummin' of the bees.
No, of the seasons none can be
As pleasant as the spring to me.

IV.

“Ho, Hum,” sighed Hezekiah Green, “the spring’s
a tryin’ spell.

I seem to be all tuckered out, and never feelin’ well.

I know I ought to be at work this very day and hour.

I guess spring fever’s got me grabbed and holds me in
its power,

For, while I know that I should be a-plowin’ all the day,
I’d ruther find some shady spot and sleep the hours away.

Though poets of its beauties sing,

I cannot say I like the spring.”

* * *

Perhaps you’ve met this Mr. Green somewhere along
life’s way,

Who never sees the brightness of a perfect summer day,
To whom the smiles of autumn, nor the fragrant breath
of spring,

Nor the crisp cool touch of winter can a glow of pleasure
bring,

Always looking to the future with impatient, eager eyes,
For sweet fulfillment of his dreams emblazoned on the skies,
Till death, at last, shall close the scene
For Mr. Hezekiah Green!

'Lias Airs Some Opinions



DON' know what's come ovah folks
Dese hifalutin' days,
Dey's got de fashion fevah,
An' dey's got de dressin' craze.
De niggahs an' de po' white folks
(I's tellin't to yo' true)
Dey tries to dress lots finer dan
De rich ones evah do.

Dey thinks becase de banker drives
A car of shiney blue
Dat dey mus' hab a shinier one,
An' hab a *shoffer* too!
An' right in mah own family—
I's sorrowful to say—
Dis thing of apin' othah folks
I sees mos' evah day.

Mah Boss he 'cludes he needs a Ford,
An' right away mah Mack—
Dat upstaht kid—he 'lows *he'd* like
To hab a *Cadillac*!
De Boss's wife she buys herse'f
A swell an' cos'ly hat,
An' den mah 'ooman up an says:
"I *mus'* hab one like dat!"

Dar ain't no sense in apin' folks
Who's got, an' *knows* dey's got
De cash to pay fo' cos'ly things,
By dem dat knows dey's not.
Dar ain't no use o' tryin' to be
Dat wot yo' knows yo' *ain't*:
A sinnah's boun' to make a bust
Who tries to be a Saint!

Dar ain't no call, as I can see,
To hol' yo' head so high
Yo' ovahlook de bacon whilst
A chasin' aftah pie,
An' lakwise, mos'ly, folks who try
To lib beyont dar means
Will some day wisht dey had de price
To buy a mess ob beans!

So 'Lias ain't a flyin' high,
Nor apein' any man.
He jes works on an' tries to do
De very bes' he can,
An' any time yo' look fo' him,
I'll tell yo' here an' now,
De chances am yo'll fin' him 'twix
De han'ls ob a plow.

Charity



IF I were rich," said Henry Brown, "if I had wealth," said he,

"How I would revel and rejoice in deeds of charity!

I'd give from my abundant store with lavish hand and free,

I'd scatter sunshine o'er the land from sea to shining sea.

I would not live for self alone, nor kneel at Mammon's feet

And beg of him his richest gifts to make my life more sweet.

No! I would seek the widow's cot that she these gifts might share,

And thus lift from her weary heart its heavy weight of care.

"To him who sought with purpose true to reach life's higher plane

How gladly would I give that he the dizzy height might gain!

I'd help the needy and distressed, the young, and trembling old

To gain a firmer hold on life, with gifts of shining gold.

Ah, many, many things I'd do if I were rich," said he,

"But fickle fortune ne'er, alas, has deigned to smile on me,

And so there's naught that I can do to lift the heavy load

From weary souls that ever plod along life's rugged road!"

O, Henry Brown, your reasoning is false as false can be,

For gifts of gold are not the soul of real charity!

An outstretched hand, a word of cheer to help a pilgrim on

When life seems but a desert drear, and hope forever gone,

To pluck a thorn and plant a flower for some wayfarer's feet,

To give from out our store of joy a smile to those we meet,

This is the truest charity, than gold a richer gift.

Then let us for our guidance take: "Look up, and laugh, and lift!"

My Wife's Mother is My Mother, Too



My wife's mother is my mother, too,
The only dear mother that I ever knew;
The only to soothe and to comfort and cheer
When life seems a desert and troubles draw near:
The only to whom in distress I can go
And pour out my burden of sorrow and woe.
Ah, never a mother more faithful and true
Than my wife's mother who's my mother too!

My wife's mother is my mother too,
The only dear mother that I ever knew;
The only to smile when our pathway seems bright,
And hope fills our hearts with the purest delight,
To give of her tears in the hour of distress.
So this is my tribute, sweet mother, to you,
For my wife's mother is my mother, too!

My wife's mother is my mother, too,
And never a mother more kindly and true.
There are jests without end of that mother-in-law
With the withering tongue and the swift wagging jaw.
We've heard her reviled, O, both often and long!
She's been blasted in story and slandered in song!
So, mothers-in-law, here's my tribute to you,
For my wife's mother is my mother too!

But—



YES," said Smith, "I know Brown well! A splendid chap is he,

A faithful friend, and honest, too, as any man can be.

He pays his debts, is ever just unto his fellow man

And always seems to try to do the very best he can.

In time of trouble or distress there's none in all the town

So quick to offer words of cheer as this chap, Robert Brown.

In fact there's so much good in him that's never yet been told

I wish that one could find no dross in so much pure gold,

But—"

"I never knew a sweeter girl," said Jones, "than Mary Hays,
Nor one more gentle mannered or more modest in her ways.

She always has a friendly smile for all, both high and low,

And where you'd find a brighter girl I'm sure that I don't know.

Indeed, I'm very certain, yes, I'm really sure," said he,

"That Mary Hays is everything that any girl should be,

For in her truth and piety and virtue you will find

And every other worthy trait of noble heart and mind,

But—"

"Old Deacon Green's a good old soul, a Christian staunch and true,

And men like him, alas," said Barnes, "I find are very few!

He loves the children and the flowers, the birds and humming bees,

He loves the fields of shimmering green, the lofty hills and trees,

And it may well be said of him, beyond the love of pelf,

He truly loves his fellow man e'en as he loves himself,

Yes, I repeat," said Barnes, "that men are few and far between
Who have such gentle, loving hearts as good old Deacon Green,

But—"

* * * *

O little word, how very small, and yet how it can raze

The fairest structure ever reared of seeming honest praise!

How quickly it can cast a shade where sunlight streamed before
And cause vague doubts to rise and cling perhaps for evermore!

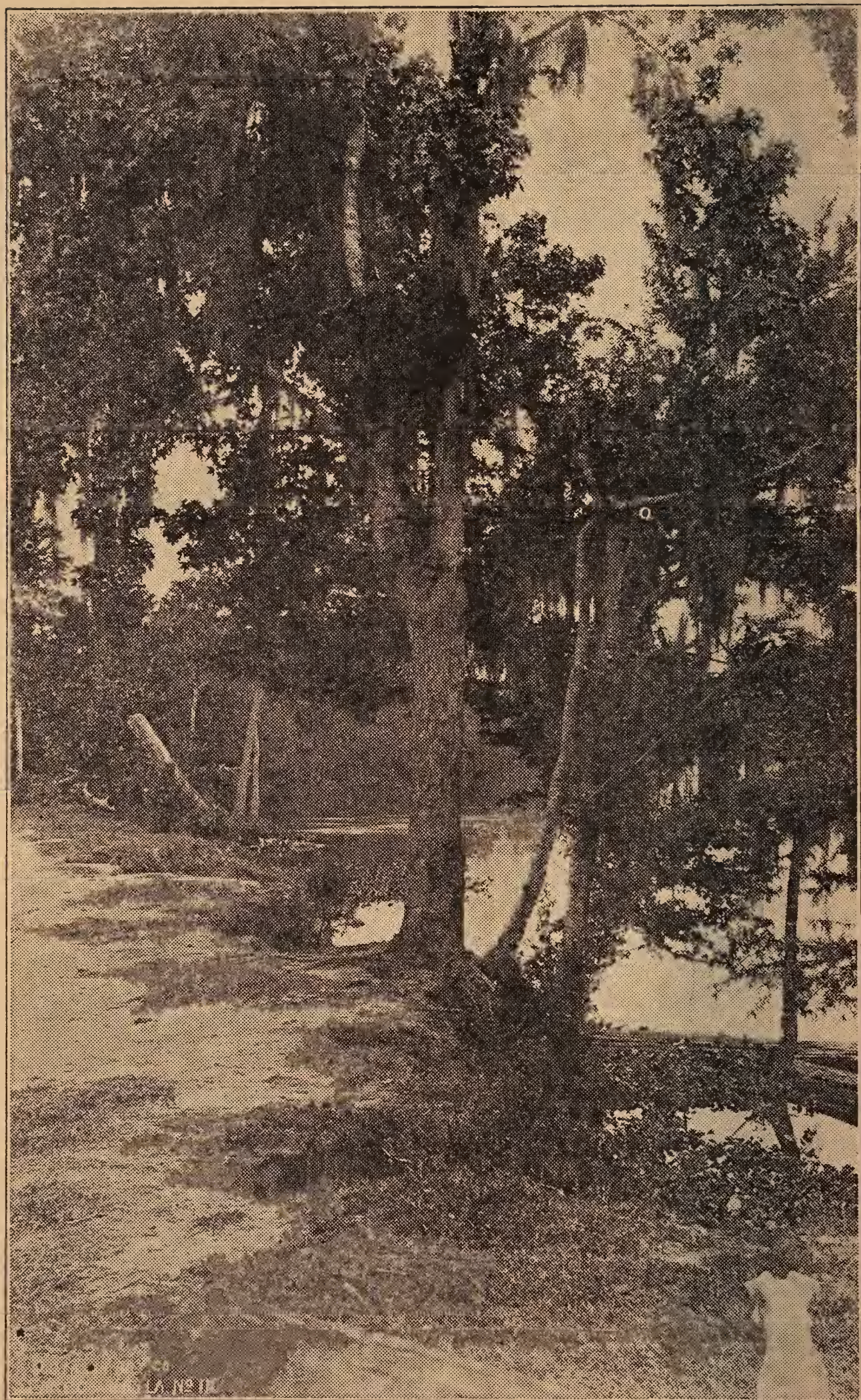
'Twere better thoughts, however kind, were never given tongue,

'Twere better that the songs of praise should still remain unsung


Than that they should be qualified by what we'd best forget—

The *biggest little* word, perhaps, in all the alphabet:

BUT!



Drifting Down the Calcasieu

ITTING all alone tonight,
Backward, mem'ry takes her flight
To another day and time,
To a fairer, sunnier clime.

Now the present from my sight
Fades into another night,
And I see the waters blue
Of the winding Calcasieu.

Now we're drifting in a boat
Where the water lilies float,
Where the stately live oaks bend,
Where magnolia blossoms send
Out upon the evening air
Fragrance sweet beyond compare!
O, what bliss to drift and dream
Once more down this mystic stream!

Once again to hear the notes
From the glorious song-birds' throats,
Birds that through the fragrant night
Sing when moon and stars are bright,
Mocking bird and whip-poor-will!
How their vespers charm and thrill,
As we idly drift and dream
Down this matchless Southern stream!

Now we glide through dogwood bloom,
In the cypress forest's gloom
Where the Spanish moss hangs low
O'er the river's silent flow;
Now where starlight softly gleams
And the silvery moonlight streams
On the waters, deeply blue,
Of the slumbrous Calcasieu!

O, 'tis sweet when memory's chain
Binds me to such scenes again,
Bringing thoughts of bygone days,
Like a softened summer haze,
Treasured dreams of days of old,
Dearer far than gifts of gold!
How my heart goes out to you—
Beauteous river Calcasieu!

.††

(With illustration, page 34)
Photo by Southern Art Company
Lake Charles, La.



Memories

H Sweetheart, oft fond memory strays
To other scenes and other days !
I see the lane where oft we strolled
In those dear sacred days of old.
I see the phlox and buttercup
Along the hedge just peeping up,
And here, Dear Heart, you promised me
My own sweet little bride to be !

Again, I see the shady nook
Beside the tiny, chattering brook.
And O the sweet companionship!
And O the thrill when lip met lip!
Shall I that moment e'er forget ?
Undimmed by years it lingers yet,
For *sure* it gave me quite a rap—
The kiss you gave another chap !



Liars All



COY little maiden came tripping along
With a laugh in her eyes, and a heart full of
song.

"Good Morning," said I, as polite as I could,
And bowing and tipping my hat as I should.

"Good Morning to you, sir, Good Morning," she
said,

With a sweet little smile and a toss of her head,
Yet the winter winds roared
And the icy rain poured,

And I thought to myself: "What liars we are!"
For 'twas not a *good* morning, indeed not, by far!

I stood in the doorway, reluctant to part
From the fair one who held fast the key to my heart,
And into the darkness I gazed with a scowl,
And just for the moment I envied the owl,
With his all-seeing eyes, for the mud was a fright,
Yet sadly and softly I whispered, "Good Night."

Then a last loving kiss

Which ended our bliss,

And again came the thought: "What liars we are!"
For the night was quite beastly, with never a star.

"Good Day, Mrs. Borem, why, how do you do?

It is really a treat, I am sure, to see you!

Come in. Take a chair. How's Hiram and Bill,

And Tommy, and Susan, and Mary, and Lil?—

What! Going so soon? Why hurry away?

Well, come back again when you've longer to stay."

The old blatherskite!

Now she's well out of sight,

I'll confess what a conscienceless liar I am,

For I hope she will *never* come back. What a sham!

—By courtesy of Judge.

Watching the Parade go by in Dixie



'S watchin' de parade go by in Dixie's happy lan'
An' I's listenin' wid raptuah to de music of de ban'.
Mah heart is keepin' time to de melody so sweet,
As dey proudly goes a-marchin' down de hot and dusty
street.

O, de cotton needs a hoein', as likewise do de cane,
But 'twill be anodah yeah ontill de circus come again
An' 'twill be a yeah ontill I heah de music of de ban',
As again it goes a marchin' by in Dixie's happy lan'!

"Dar's many things dat chahm an' please a little coon lak me:
De cunnin' 'possum, big an' fat, up in de 'simmon tree,
De turkey gobbler roostin' low upon de hick'ry limb,
(Mah mouf sho' watahs pow'ful wen I looks up at him!)
De fish a-floppin' in de crick jes' waitin' foh de line,
De watahmelon, big an' ripe, a hangin' on de vine,
But nothin' stirs mah feelin's lak de music of de ban',
As I watches de parade go by in Dixie's happy lan'!

"O, de hosses an' de wagons, dey am mighty fine an' gran',
But dey do not chahm an' thrill me lak de music of de ban'!
Dey do not fill me wid delight, an' make mah spirits rise
Ontill it seems I's lifted from de earth up to de skies!
Tomorrow I must travel back to de ol' farm again,
An' through the long hot hours hoe de cotton an' de cane,
But mem'ry oft will thrill me of de music of de ban',
As I watched de big parade go by in Dixie's happy lan'!"

To my Dog



YES, good old dog, I know your heart is true,
And that your proffered friendship is sincere.
That you might prove a traitor to my trust
I never yet have felt the slightest fear.

You do not flatter me with honied words,
Nor yet with silly smile and vapid smirk,
But in the deep wells of your soft brown eyes
I know that candor and true friendship lurk.

You do not praise with words of empty sound,
But, but by the token of your wagging tail,
You give a pledge of constancy and love
That, in my heart, I know will never fail.
I know your friendship ever will abide
In sunshine or amid the falling rain,
When pleasure sheds her smiles along life's path
Or when the soul is racked with grief and pain.

For with me you have gone down in the vale
Of gruesome poverty when friends were few—
Few, did I say? Aye, where was even one,
Who kept the faith of other days but you?
Then wag your tail and look up in my eyes!
Old dog, I need no other pledge or sign
To know that, come what may, I have a friend
Whose love and faith and trust are ever mine.

Why Fight it O'er Again



SOMETIMES feel that I would like to be a boy again,
With all of boyhood's happy dreams and all its joys and
pain.

I feel that I would like to go a-swimmin' in the creek,
Or play a game of "Fox-an'-hounds," or "Tag," or "Hide-an'-
seek."

I'd like to see the old school house that stood upon the hill,
The farm house and the orchard and the quaint old cider mill.
I feel the thrill of childhood joys, the charm of bygone days,
As backward o'er life's rugged path I cast my wistful gaze!

Sometimes I feel the wish that I could turn the tide of years
Back to the days of youthful joys and youthful hopes and fears.
Sometimes the longing comes to me that I might stand once
more,

With eager pulse and earnest heart, at manhood's open door,
Armed for the fray, with Love to Guide, and Hope a beacon
light,

When all the world seemed full of cheer and every pathway
bright!

'Tis then, with Love and Faith to guide, the battle seems half
won,

Ere yet the bugle's blast is heard or yet the fight's begun,

And then I hear a still voice say: "Why sigh for pleasures
past,

For youth is but a fleeting gift and pleasures cannot last?


You've had your share of toil and care, you've tasted joy and
pain,

You've fought and all but won the fray. Why fight it o'er
again?

Alas, the strife was stern and grim, the roadway over-run
With thorns and brambles for the feet ere yet the heights were
won!

So now that you have topped the hill and face the glowing west,
Why not enjoy the blessed boon of perfect peace and rest?

My Butterfly

H, surely I was first to catch
The bright flash of thy golden wing,
Adown the meadow path to-day,
Thou pretty harbinger of spring!
Though late the earth was drab and sere,
And cold and gray the morning sky,
I know that soon the flowers will bloom,
My butterfly! My butterfly!

For now the earth is bathed in smiles
And early springtime zephyrs blow,
The water lilies soon will lift
To thee their chalices of snow;
The flowers and grass will wake to life
Where yet the fields so barren lie,
And earth and sky will warm to thee,
My butterfly! My butterfly!

My butterfly, there's one I know
Whom I would liken unto thee,
Whose smile, bright as thy golden wing,
Is sweet as roses breath to me.
Then wilt thou fly to her and say:
"A love like mine can never die,"
And bring her answer back to me,
My butterfly! My butterfly!

The Experience Meeting



E'S only got ten min'ts mo', so say yo' say right quick!
Say, "Praise de Lawd" ef nothin' mo', an' gib de debil
a lick!

Bruddah Crow, you gib yo' 'sper'ence, an' tell us wy
you went

Agin de Lawd, an' whaffo' you 'cluded to repent.

De bruddah say he trod de paths ob sin fo' many a day,
But, Bless de Lawd, at last he seed de yerror ob his way!
An' he say, wen he's a sinnah, dat on mos' ebry night
He ustah steal some chickens. I 'clar, dat wasn't right!

But de Lawd will holp de sinnah ef he will His pahdon seek:
Now de bruddah say he only steals chickens *onct a week!*
Dah's a 'zample fo' you sinnahs: Dat bruddah wen he dies
Will scoot away jest like a flash to mansions in de skies!

O sinnahs! won't you come right now an' jine dis pilgrim ban',
An' trabble wid us as we march to Canaan's happy lan'?
I knows dar's many heah tonight whose souls am black wid sin!
Den come an' I will pray wid you to let de light shine in!

Come right along! Don't be afeard! O come! You won't do
dat?

Den we'll dispuss—but 'fo' we go we'll pass aroun' de hat.
Now Bruddah Wool, we'll ax ob you to pass de hat aroun'—
An', Bruddah, see dar ain't no tah a-stickin' in de crown!

* * *

Now may de Lawd be wid you all until we meet agin,
An' may He free you sinnahs from de heaby bon's ob sin!

Nightfall in May



INTO my window soft breezes are borne,
Fragrant with jasmine and bay,
Grateful and welcome each tender caress
After the heat of the day.

Slowly the sun in its majesty goes,
Shyly the stars now appear,
Lightships that sail o'er the trackless sea
Of the night till the dawn is near.

Fire-flies flit here and there through the trees,
The cricket's shrill chirp is heard,
While up from the forest comes softly the sweet
Song of the mocking bird.

Peaceful and calm as a babe in repose,
Not a ripple upon its breast,
The river lies like a thread of gold
Stretching from east to west.

And now for the time the world with its cares
Fades with the parting day,
And life is as sweet as a summer dream
This beautiful evening in May.

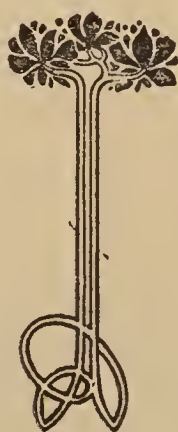
New Orleans

(A City With a Soul)



KNOW not by what mystic power
Or by what tricks of sorcery
You wove the magic of your spell
That won my heart away from me.
I only know, proud Southern Queen,
As through your ancient streets I stroll,
With all the splendor of their past,
You are "A City with a Soul."

I know the stately Southern pride,
And courtly grace of other days
That lingers faintly with you yet
Can never blend with modern ways.
And so, with all your lure and charm,
You seem a City set apart,
That man may come and dream with you
And give the homage of his heart !



My Old Friend, Pierre LeDoux



'D lak to be down on de ma'sh
Again tonight in Calcasieu
Wid my ol' frien' of odder days—
Dat good for nothin' Pierre LeDoux.

Yah, good for nothin' but to hunt,
An' feesh—I guess dat mus' be true,
But every night, mos' here of late,
I dream of ol' frien', Pierre LeDoux.

Las' night I dream we're huntin' goose
In dat same little ol' canoe,
Down on de salt ma'sh by Beeg Lake—
Jus' me an' good ol' Pierre LeDoux!

I dream I hear de wil' goose honk,
An' den I hear Pierre honkin' too—
She's got *some* honk to beat de ban'—
Dat same ol' falla, Pierre LeDoux!

An' den a hon'ard goose or more,
Come flyin' over our canoe!
Bang, bang, bang, bang den went de gun
Of me an' ol' frien', Pierre LeDoux!

I nevair see so many goose
Come tumblin' 'roun' dat ol' canoe!
An' one beeg falla, she come down
Right on de head of Pierre LeDoux!

I laugh so loud—dat I wak up,
An' spoil de fun you see, Mon Dieu!
So I can't say how many goose
We kill—jus' me an' Pierre LeDoux.

The Eagle and the Hen



HIGH up in the air on a summer day
Swiftly an eagle winged his way
O'er meadow and woodland and glade and
glen,

And over the busy haunts of men,
'Till, weary at last, he sank to rest
Far up on the loftiest mountain's crest.
With a look of scorn he beheld the scene,
The leafy glades and the meadows green.

"O, humble dwellers on earth," said he,
"How dreary, indeed, must your portion be,
Never to know the sweet delight,
Or feel the thrill of an eagle's flight
As on swift pinions he cleaves his way
Up through the lowering clouds of gray,
Up, and still up in the sea of blue
'Till the scenes on earth are all lost to view!

"O, I am King of the birds!" cried he,
"The Monarch of air and sky and sea!
And never can hurt, or harm betide,
Though I on the crest of the whirlwind ride,
And never a fear or a doubt do I feel,
For my pinions are stronger than bands of steel!
How I pity the creatures of lowly birth
That are doomed forever to walk the earth!"

An old brown hen, with her clamoring brood,
Busily scratching the earth for food,
Paused for a moment to cast an eye
Up where the eagle was perched so high:
"I know you are King of the birds," quoth she,
"To this, great eagle, I'll humbly agree,
And never, like you, may I hope to rise
'Till I'm lost to view in the azure skies!


“But listen, proud bird, and I’ll tell you
What even an old brown hen may do:
Though an humble creature of lowly birth,
Doomed forever to scratch the earth,
She may add her gifts to the bountiful yield
Of orchard and vineyard and ripened field—
Rich treasures to fill the coffers of men
With silver and gold— may the old brown hen.

“Though never she’ll know the keen delight
Or feel the thrill of your rushing flight,
She will lay her eggs and will rear her brood
That the men who toil may have daily food!
She will give of her fruit and her flesh that they
May be strong and healthful from day to day!
So which would you think best beloved of men,
You, Eagle, or I—just an Old Brown Hen?”



To the Alamo

(San Antonio, Texas)

 **A**S through these sacred halls I stray,
What visions round me throng
Of men whose deeds have oft been told
In story and in song !

Of men of might who fought for right,
For country and for home,
Whose names and fame shall brighter grow
In ages yet to come !

Plain men were they, but braver far
Than any knights of old.
Unlettered, but with nerves of steel,
And hearts of purest gold !

O ye who love brave deeds of men
Who've died for Liberty,
Pay here the tribute of a sigh
And bend the humble knee !

For though these hardy Freemen knew
A horde two thousand strong
Was sweeping o'er the Texan plain
With ribald shout and song,

While scarce two hundred could they count
In all their little band—
The flower, the glory and the pride
Of their beloved land.

Not for a moment did they quail,
Nor did fear dim an eye.
Theirs but to fight in Freedom's cause!
Theirs but to do or die!

Like the fierce hordes of hungry wolves
That swarm the great plateau,
With hearts aflame with bitter hate,
Came down the serried foe!

Let Mercy draw her mystic vale
Around each bloody bier,
And o'er our heroes' funeral pyre
Let Pity drop a tear!

Yet little Santa Ana dreamed
How dearly he would pay
For every gallant Texan son
That fell in that dread fray!

Rest on Brave Travis—Bowie too,
And Crockett—gallant soul!
No brighter names than yours are writ
On Fame's eternal scroll.

God Bless the dear old Alamo!
God Bless her sainted dead!
Within these hallowed chambers may
No impious foot e'er tread!

She Has No Heart for Me



HER smile is like the morning sun
In days of early spring,
The fragrance of the sweetest flowers
Around her seems to cling;
And, though I love her more than life,
I'm sad as sad can be,
For, of the fellows here about,
She chums with all but me.

One day I asked this winsome maid
To be my little bride.
She looked at me, and then she laughed
And laughed until she cried!
Now what's a laddie goin' to do
With a lassie such as she?
She smiles alike on all the chaps
But has no heart for me.



To the Str. Mascot

(Pleasure Boat of F. C. L.)



WOULD you fly far away from the world with its strife?
Would you banish dull care for a time?
Would you visit the haunts of Dame Nature with me
In this beautiful Southern clime?

Where the sunshine is soft as the dew on the rose,
Where the leaves and the grasses are green,
Where the birds sing all day and the flowers are bright,
And the water's a silvery sheen?

Then, come with me now and away and away
O'er the broad silent lake we will flee,
And the breezes that ripple its bosom shall bring
A tonic to you and to me.

For the "Mascot's" as swift as a bird on the wing,
And as proud as a beautiful steed!
And you will agree with me, surely, my friend,
She's a model of beauty and speed.

Come, the "Mascot" is waiting to bear us away,
And over the waters we'll go,
Like the eagle who swift flees from crag to high crag
Or the arrow that's sped from the bow!

Ah, the heart leaps with rapture and pride in our boat,
As her way through the waters she wends,
And the tall stately pine nods a gallant salute,
While the song bird its sweet tribute sends!

And now, as toward yon far dim wooded isle
On the wings of the morning we flee,
I know that the breezes so fragrant will waft
A new life to you and to me!

Uncle Ephriam on the Comet

(The famous Halley comet of half a generation ago is said to have aroused the Negroes of the South to a high pitch of excitement and superstitious fear)



LOOK heah, mistah, kin yo' tell me 'bout dis comic in de sky?

Does yo' think it's gwine to hit us or will it pass us by?
I heah dat it am trablin' fo'ty million miles a day,
An' de worstest thing about it am it's headed dis a-way!

An' dey say ef it do hit us—Good-bye Katie, bar de gate!
Needn't staht to pray fo' mercy, fo' it's gwine to be too late!
So I's prayin' whilst I kin, sah, dat it maybe make a miss,
Fo' de white folks say dat comic's big as twenty worl's lak dis!

Now I's libed in dis ol' worl', sah, eighty yeah, or maybe mo',
An I ain't afeard to die, sah, wen it's time fo' me to go,
But I don't jest zac'ly fancy bein' *bumped* into dat lan'
Whar de white winged angels wait us an' de Saints in glory
stan'!

Guess dar ain't no doubt about it, ef it hits dis earth—*Ker-bim*—
De only chanct dat we will hab am jest to trus' in Him,
An' maybe ef our trus' am soun', an, maybe ef we pray,
De Lawd will check dat comic's speed an' turn its nose away!

No, I ain't afeard to answer w'en ol' Gabriel toots his horn,
But dat comic makes me *creepy* jest as sho' as you am born!
Yet I knows de Lawd's han' guides it as it trabels through de
sky,
An' I's prayin'—evah prayin' dat it pass dis ol' worl' by!

The Kiss of My Baby

For E. J. M.



WHAT is so sweet as the kiss of my baby
When, weary, at evening I enter my door?
What joy can compare with the love of my darling—
My sweet little Mamie, whose age is just four?

When things go all wrong and life seems but a desert,
When troubled and heart-sick with striving in vain,
When my soul grows weary with thwarted ambitions
And the sunshine is lost in a whirlwind of rain,

O, the rapture of feeling around my neck stealing
Her soft baby arms like a garland of love!
Then her sweet baby prattle drives back the dark shadows
And over my spirit peace broods like a dove.

Her mother? Ah, long since the angels came came downward
And bore her away to that home in the skies!
But her spirit still dwells like a sweet benediction
In the clear azure light of our baby's bright eyes.

I have tasted the fruit of false friendship so often
That my heart has grown weary and sick with it all!
I have drained to the dregs the cup of life's pleasures
That ever turned acrid and bitter as gall!

Then come to my arms, my own precious darling,
And lend me the solace your lips can impart,
For not earth's richest treasure could give me the pleasure
I feel when I press you close, close to my heart!

Michigan



MICHIGAN; I love thy fields,
Thy sylvan dells and crystal streams
When Springtime zephyrs kiss the
earth

And Springtime sunlight softly gleams.

I love thy forests' sombre shade,
Thy fruited hills, each fertile plain,
That yield so gen'rously to man
Their glorious gifts of fruit and grain.

I love thee in thy sadder hours,
When Autumn sheds her wistful smiles
O'er smoky hills and misty vales,
And glint of lang'rous sun beguiles.

I love thee yet when snow and ice
Have bound thee in their chill embrace,
And Nature, in a graver mood,
Reveals a stern, impassioned face.

When all the hills and fields are clad
In robes of spotless purity,
And every chattering brook is stilled,
My heart still swells with love for thee.

I love the far-flung costal line
That skirts thy wonderous inland seas
Which, storm-swept, roll their mighty
waves,

Or ripple to the gentler breeze.

I love Superior's rock-bound shore,
And all thy myriad lakes that rest
Aglitter in the morning's sun
Like jewels on a maiden's breast.

The sweet old songs of Southern lands
We've heard, it seems, since time began,
So here's the tribute of my heart
To thee—My Own Dear Michigan!

A Prayer

DEAR Lord, my soul looks up to Thee
In thanks and deep humility,
To Thee who holdest in Thy Hand
Our mighty and beloved land,
To Thee who watchest o'er us all,
Yet seest the little sparrow fall,
To Thee who givest us strength of mind
To do and dare, to seek and find.

My way, O Lord, has ever been
Along the lowly walks of men,
And if, at times, I have complained
Or if my faith in Thee has waned,
And if I've envied some great wealth
And others strength or rugged health,
Thy Gracious Pardon now I seek,
For, Lord, Thou knowest I am weak.

Yea, though my life is drab and sere,
I know that Thou art ever near
To guard and keep, to guide and bless
Through all life's dreary wilderness.
The riches of Thy Grace are mine
And all I am or have is Thine,
Nor has the story half been told
Of all Thy blessings mani fold.

So why complain when faint and weak?
Or why should I earth's treasures seek?
For I am richer far than they
Who proudly walk the flowery way,
And worship ever at the shrine
Of mammon, Lord, instead of Thine.
All, all I ask is strength to be
More worthy of Thy love for me.

This is my plea, and this my prayer.
Full well I know that Thou wilt share
My every burden, and wilt guide
Me through the wildly surging tide,
And bring me safely home at last
When all the storms of life are past.
And for this blessed hope divine,
Dear Lord, the praise be ever Thine!

Jealousy



CURSE thee, hag, with thy dark spider eyes!
Think not that thy envenomed tongue shall find
In mine a listening ear,


Think not to use thine evil power
To burst the bonds of faith and love and trust!
Thou has no right within the sacred precincts of my home,
Thou hast no right to drag thy hideous form
Into the holy light of God's great day!
Thy true abiding place is in the darksome caves
Where jackals snap and snarl,
Where serpents creep and other noisome creatures dwell,
And yet, of all this noxious brood, there's none so vile as thee!
There's none that wields a subtle power like thine.
'Tis thine alone to sear the loving heart;
'Tis thine, incarnate thing of evil thought,
To blast the happy home
And pour thy vitriol in the ear where late the vows
Of love were breathed, and thine to tell
False tales to turn the blissful tide of love
Into a raging flood of doubt!

* * *

O, curse thee, hag! O, curse thy spider eyes, and serpent's
tongue!

How many homes hast thou dispoiled!
How many souls hast thou dragged down to woe and death!
How often has the pure brow of virtue
Been smirched by thy vile touch! But think not, hag,
To pour thy evil counsel in my ear,
Or plant the seed of doubt within my heart.
So go thy way
Back to the darksome dens of other loathsome things!
The pure light of sun and moon and stars
Is not for thee,
Nor love and faith and trust for thy companionship.

Expectations

XPECTATIONS, how they thrill us!
How with rapture oft they fill us!
'Mid the turmoil and the strife
Of this hurly-burly life,
Though the clouds of sorrow fall
Close around us like a pall
Expectations soon will lighten,
Soon will cheer and soon will brighten.

O, those blessed Expectations,
Cure for griefs and all vexations,
Bringing balm to hearts a-weary,
Peace to darkened souls and dreary!
What a sad old world 'twould be
If no hope we e'er could see!
How they soften tribulations—
Expectations, Expectations!

Though the clouds are dark and dreary,
And the winds seem never weary,
As the tender starlight gleams
Or the moonlight softly streams,
So along your path and mine
Soon the light of Hope will shine.
These the boon of all the Nations:
Blessed Hope and Expectations!

My Treasure Chest

(To Mrs. F. E. J.)



HAVE a little treasure chest that's dearer far to me
Than any costly casket ever brought from o'er the sea,
And though 'twere set with richest gems and filled with
jewels rare

It could not win my love away, nor my affection share.
It could not wake the fondest dreams enshrined within my heart,
Nor call up thoughts that thrill my soul and cause the tear to
start.

O, not the richest gifts of gold, nor rarest gems could be
So fondly cherished in my heart, nor half so dear to me!

My "chest" is but an old hair trunk, and bears the name of
"ROY,"

Its "treasures" all the trinkets that are dearest to a boy!
A kite, a dozen marbles, a whip, a piece of string,
A little hammer, and some nails, a jack knife, and a sling,
A hoop, a slate, a picture book with garish colors bright,
And all the many things that are a little boy's delight;
A sail boat, and a choo-choo train with tiny clanging bell,—
All placed there by the chubby hands that loved them all so well.

And now a little pair of shoes and cap of faded gray
I've added to those treasures, for the lad has gone away.
The little shoes, the faded cap, the toys he'll need no more,
For angels came and bore him to a brighter, better shore.
And this is why no earthly gifts could tempt me e'er to part
With this old fashioned, battered trunk so precious to my heart,
And why my little "treasure chest" is dearer far to me
Than all the jeweled caskets ever brought from o'er the sea!

Farewell to thee, Winter



FAREWELL to thee, Winter, thou art gone to thy grave,
And over thy death-bed the green grasses wave!
Not a sigh of regret for thee, never a tear,
Thou hoary old Monarch, we'll shed o'er thy bier!
For who would prefer the icy old King,
With his withering breath, to the Princess of Spring?
Farewell to thee, Winter, soon over thy tomb
The flowers of Summer will burst into bloom!



My Comforter

(For E. J. M.)



HAVE a little comforter who climbs upon my knee,
And makes the world seem possible when things go
wrong with me.

My Mamie's way is just to say: "O papa, never mind,
Tomorrow night all will be right, my papa good and kind!"

Thus, when the weary day is done and, with my brain awhirl,
I gladly seek my cottage home, then comes my little girl:
"Now papa dear, just never fear," the little sage will say,
"Though shadows now are on your brow, I'll kiss them all away!"

And then she wreathes her baby arms around my willing neck:
"I love you, papa, yes I do, a bushel and a peck!
I love but you, my sweetheart true, so, papa, never mind.
Tomorrow night all will be right, my papa good and kind!"

This little maid I love so well—my blue eyed Mamie Claire—
Has never known the meaning of a mother's tender care.
For on the day in sunny May that gave to us this prize,
With bated breath we watched while death forever closed her
eyes.

God bless this little comforter—my precious Mamie Claire!
God bless those little rosy lips that kiss away my care!
Her head at rest upon my breast, the shadows of the day,
The weary strife and cares of life all quickly fade away.

The Little Brown Cot in a Devonshire Lane

(A Bit of Old England for R.)




HERE'S a little brown cot in a Devonshire lane
That my memory so often recalls:
Below its one window the wild roses climb,
The ivy clings close to its walls,
And the vision so fondly enshrined in my heart
Of that little home over the sea,
With its tumble-down chimney and low sagging roof,
Is more precious than riches to me!

O, that little brown cot in a Devonshire lane!
How plain I can see it tonight,
Though the tears of regret that well up from my heart
Are blurring and dimming my sight!
I can see the green fields and the meadows beyond
And the brook that winds over the lea,
But that little brown cot in a Devonshire lane
Is the thing that is dearest to me!

For a mother I see in the wide open door,
And in mem'ry I wander again
With a maiden whose face is as fair as the flowers
That bloom in this Devonshire lane.
I can smell the sweet fragrance of heather and rose,
As slowly the night shadows fall,
And of the fond mem'ries embalmed in my heart
These are dearest and sweetest of all!

I See thy Sweet Face Everywhere

H, dear one, oft I've seen thy face
Amid the clouds of battle smoke,
When shell and shrapnell shrieked o'erhead
And cannon unto cannon spoke.

When death stalked grimly at my side
And hope grew faint, I still could trace,
As clearly as in days gone by,
Each feature of thine own fair face!

Ah, sweet, when courage fain would flag,
And it would seem that Truth and Right,
So sadly bruised and sorely tried,
Must yield at last to tyrant's might,
When black despair clutched at my heart,
Then, like sweet drops of summer rain
On earth's fair flowers, the thought of thee
Brought faith and hope and strength again.

Thy whispered words were in my ears
When steel met steel in "No Man's Land,"
When gallant Yank with dauntless breast
Met Hun in battle, hand to hand.
And when the ground was strewn with dead
And conquest reached its highest peak,
Through tear-dimmed eyes I saw thy face
As when I kissed thy blushing cheek!

Now soon beneath Old Glory's folds,
With shining blade and shimmering lance,
To Berlin we will take our way
And leave the sacred soil of France.
But distance ne'er can lend a charm,
Dear heart, so sweet to woo from me
Remembrance, nor can time e'er rend
The cord that binds my heart to thee!

The Old Family Portraits



AMONG the many treasured visions that in mem'ry I recall
Are the old home and the pictures that once hung upon
the wall.

There were pictures of green valleys, sylvan dells and
streams galore;

There were lofty snow-capped mountains, and, O, many, many
more!

But the ones that I have cherished in my heart above them all
Are the dear old family portraits that once hung upon the wall.

There was grandma, in the oval just above the fireboard;
There was grandad, as a soldier, dressed in blue, with shining
sword.

Both were then in youth's bright morning. Love was life, and
life was sweet,

And their path seemed bright with promise to their unreluctant
feet.

Father, mother, sister, brother, cousins, aunts, and uncles—all
Were among the treasured portraits that once hung upon the
wall.

Time has given many pleasures that my fancy can recall
But the mem'ry of those pictures is the dearest of them all.
And, though many years had come and gone since those sweet
days of yore,

My wandering footsteps turned at last to that old home once
more.

I longed to view the old time scenes, and of them best of all,
I longed to see those portraits that once hung upon the wall.

Alas, for all my fondest dreams of those sweet days of old
That long has been more dear to me than gifts of shining gold!
New forms and faces told me that the old had passed away,
And changes everywhere proclaimed the new and modern day;
And modern ways and modern thought had doomed them one
and all—

Those old familiar portraits that once hung upon the wall!

Save for some gaudy lithographs, the walls were stark and bare.
Change, change was all about the place and in the very air.
But, yes, with those old colored prints of brook and sylvan dell
And lofty hills and valleys green that I remembered well—
Up in the attic's dust and grime, and stained beyond recall,
I fond those dear old portraits that once hung upon the wall!

Rum



THOU dark visaged creature of the night!
Thou low browed assassin of men's souls!
Couldst all the blood thou hast shed in ages past
Be poured upon the earth today,
'Twould drench each smiling field and flowery vale,
And every crystal stream would rush, a crimson flood!
Couldst all the evil thou has wrought
Be writ upon a mighty scroll, 'twould stretch from sea to sea!
Couldst all the hearts that thou hast torn
But voice their anguish in one awful wail,
'Twould rise above the loftiest mountain top
And pierce the very dome of heaven, itself!
Vile skulker in the shadows,
Cast not thine evil eyes nor "shake thy gory locks" at me,
For I have marked thee well!
The blasted lives, the widowed homes, "the orphan's mute
appeal,"
The weary hearts that break and bleed,
The drunkard's maudlin gibber and vile oaths are all of thee,
And many a beauteous flower of womanhood has blossomed in
Love's early morn
But to be plucked by thy unholy hand, and cast,
A bleeding wreck, upon Life's stony way!
Of all the loathsome things that curse the world today,
Of all the marshaled hosts of sin and shame
Thou art the Lord and Master!
The wreck and ruin thou hast wrought is but to thee
A badge of honor, and a symbol of thy victories!
But harkest thou! The day is drawing swiftly nigh
When all the serried hosts of higher thoughts and purer deeds
Will rise in the full strength of righteous wrath
And sweep thee from thy bloody throne, and from the world
forever!



And when at last that day hath dawned the sun will shed a softer
glow,
And every star send forth a brighter beam
Upon a world redeemed from thy vile reign!
God haste the day when thou
And all the evil courtiers in thy train
May dwell within the hearts of men but as a bitter memory, and
a noisome dream!
And to this end I dedicate this earnest prayer,
And consecrate this heartfelt plea!



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